



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

FACTS CONCERNING OUR REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

We have no time to waste in comments on the conduct of the Maine Legislature in expelling the Rev. Mr. Judd from his chaplaincy, for the utterance before his own people, not before the Legislature, of opinions different from their own respecting the war of our Revolution; but, as the obnoxious discourse is published, and every one can now judge for himself how far their victim was "worthy of death or of bonds," we shall present our readers with a few extracts.

THINGS TO BE REMEMBERED IN THIS DISCUSSION.—Every inquirer into the moral character of our Revolutionary War should bear in mind the following facts. 1. *The only point in dispute respects its accordancy with the gospel.* The friends of peace have nothing to do with it in any other light, and would not try its character by any other standard.—2. To this test our Revolutionary War has never been brought by any considerable number even of Christians. Most of our forefathers honestly believed it right; and we, as a sort of traditional faith, have been wont to regard it not only as just and glorious, but as consistent with the gospel, and eminently acceptable to the God of peace.—3. There has always been diversity of opinion among good men respecting the character of that war. Large numbers of our forefathers, equal in moral worth to the patriots of the Revolution, conscientiously regarded it as a wicked rebellion, and stood aloof from it at the hazard of their good name, their property and their life. The great mass of Christians in England, and through the world, believed it to be wrong. Which were most likely to be right in their moral estimate of that war, its abettors or its mere spectators?—4. Inquiry and discussion are gradually bringing into doubt the long admitted consistency of our Revolutionary War with the gospel. This fact no well-informed man will deny; and the day may not be far distant when few *Christians* will attempt to reconcile that war with the gospel.—5. The strongest friends of peace have all due respect for the *men* of the Revolution, and call in question, not the object which they sought, but solely the *means* they employed for its attainment. We approve their object, and admire in most respects their character. We merely ask, does the gospel justify even such a war, the best in all modern history? Were its motives, its measures, its deeds, its moral results, such as the gospel approves? Would the spirit of Christ, if breathed fully into all our forefathers, have prompted or permitted that war?

HOW THE STRONGEST PEACE-MEN REGARD OUR REVOLUTIONARY WAR.—Those who think all war inconsistent with the gospel, must of course regard that of our Revolution in the same light; yet we suspect

that their precise views of it are not generally understood. On many, if not most points concerning it, they agree with the mass of its friends. They believe that our forefathers were ill treated; that their grievances ought to have been redressed; that they were clearly justifiable in using, for this purpose, any proper means; that they were right, and their opponents wrong, on all the main points in dispute; that many of them were probably actuated by good motives, and were unquestionably men of eminent worth; that the principles and modes of reasoning commonly adopted, would fully justify their resort to arms; that their struggle unto death for their rights, was as justifiable as any war on record, not expressly commanded or permitted by God; but that, *since the gospel forbids all war, even that of our Revolution was an unchristian and wicked method of obtaining our rights.*

This is the only point at issue; and, instead of expatiating in passionate enthusiasm on points admitted alike by both parties, we wish to fix attention on the dark and doubtful features of that contest. If we may not do this, there is an end to all argument, to all fair or free discussion. If we may not think as we please, there is no freedom of thought; if we may not speak what we think, there is no freedom of speech; or if the utterance of our honest convictions must subject us, without any forms of law, or show of reason, to proscription, denunciation and abuse, then are some of us still kept by the very champions of liberty under a despotism incomparably worse than that against which our forefathers drew the sword.

We confess our surprise at the general sensitiveness on this subject. The admirers of that war act just as if they were afraid to meet fairly and fully the question of its accordancy with the gospel; as if they suspected it to be wrong, yet were resolved to shut their eyes upon its questionable features, and still shout its unqualified praise. Can this be right?

STATEMENTS FOR WHICH MR. JUDD WAS EXPELLED.—He believes the gospel which he preaches is repugnant to war, both to the feelings that originate, and the results that characterize war. He believes that war is wrong in principle, erroneous in policy, corrupt in practice, disastrous in effect. It would not become him to say he believes less than a distinguished infidel, Voltaire, that “all the vices of all ages and places do not come up to the mischiefs and enormities of a *single campaign*.” He is opposed to war as a minister, as a man, as an American citizen. He believes *all* war to be demoralizing alike in spirit and practice. He conceives that all war, by whomsoever undertaken, and for what purpose soever prosecuted, abounds in calamities and wrongs of every description. He believes that in any event of war, the best of men are unnaturalized and depraved, and the best of purposes sullied and deformed. He believes that if Christ himself were now on the earth, He would never, for any pretext, reason or motive

whatever, engage in war. He believes that we are under obligation to hate no man, and even to love our enemies. Furthermore, he believes all that is gained by war, or has been gained by any war, can be gained, and could have been gained, and that with a thousand fold advantage, by means of peace. Such is his belief, whether correct or erroneous, foolish or wise, conscientiously entertained, and intelligently adopted. Nor are his views on these subjects any secret. Before the people to whom it is his privilege to minister, he has inculcated and illustrated them, in public and private, in conversations and in sermons.

It is his single desire, in this discourse, by unfolding the evils of war, to disseminate the love and the observances of peace. He would make the evils of the Revolutionary War, be they more or less, an argument to the mind of his hearers for the renunciation of all war. He confesses that to have been the holiest war on record; but he would dispel the illusion of war, by entering its most sacred retreats, and showing that an essential evil cleaves to the system, and that immoralities are inborn in its purest sources.

He protests, that he has no wish to reflect upon the fathers of the Revolution, as noble a race of men as the earth affords *in every other capacity*; but who, in their *war capacity*, and among them he enumerates his own ancestry, as the facts developed in this discourse serve to indicate, were not proof against that gorgon face which turns every thing it looks upon into another nature.

In the conduct of the discourse, he has confined himself chiefly to facts; facts which are a matter of historical record; facts which in the copiousness of the references are open to every one's revision. They are facts challenging doubt and inquiry; challenging contradiction or countervailance; challenging even constructive evasion. If there be any sentiments in the discourse, they are the sentiments of facts; if there be any argument in the discourse, it is the argument of facts; if there be any crimination, it is the crimination of facts; if any strictures, they are the strictures of facts; if any libel, it is the libel of facts. He took the facts as he found them, too stubborn things to be winked out of sight, and he presented them as he found them, hoping that the facts, and the *facts alone*, would have weight with his hearers.

WAR NOT NECESSARY TO OUR INDEPENDENCE.—It is my clear opinion, based on a full investigation of the case, and matured in the most deliberate thought; that *the separation from England was unavoidable and necessary, and certainly involved in the course of things*; but that it might have been made *peaceably, without the spilling of a drop of blood*.

CONSISTENCY OF THE REVOLUTIONISTS.—An ostensible cause of the resort to arms on the part of our fathers was British taxation. But the colonists were taxed to meet expenses that had been incurred for their own good, emolument and glory. In the year 1756 the French held possessions in this country of vast magnitude and importance. France owned the Floridas, Mississippi, the Mississippi river, parts of the States of Tennessee, Kentucky, all of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, part of New York, the Canadas, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and as much of the lands west of the Mississippi as she chose to concern herself with. The French, at this period controlled the fur trade, and the cod fisheries on the northern Atlantic coast. The western tribes of Indians were in their employ, and through their instigation,

became a constant source of annoyance to the British colonists. France then was at the height of her glory, and the most powerful nation on the globe. In 1756, Great Britain, alarmed at her power, and trembling before her progress, in conjunction with the colonists went to war with her. The ostensible ground of the war was French control in the American provinces, and the ostensible object of the war was to drive the French from those possessions. This is commonly known as the old French war, or the Seven Years' war.

This war received the hearty concurrence and support of the colonists. As parts of the British empire, as well as in furtherance of their own interests, they sustained it by their own energies, and contributed to it of their supplies. British and American troops were united in every battle. Massachusetts in the course of three years, contributed nearly 2,000,000 dollars for the support of the war. The colonies, generally, afforded 20,000 troops, and 12,000 seamen for carrying it on. As a result of the war, vast tracts of territory reverted back to the Americans, millions on millions of acres of the finest land in the world.

But the war cost England a vast sum, nearly 400,000,000 dollars. The nation was oppressed by the immense debt of the war. They were obliged to resort to all means for relief. Then commenced the system of taxation, in some mode or other, to an enormous extent. The people of England were taxed to an unprecedented degree. Taxes were laid on cider, ale, beer, porter, tea, sugar, coffee, molasses. "The unexampled expenses of the war," says Marshall in his life of Washington, "rendered unavoidable a great addition to the regular and usual taxes of the nation." Among other expedients to this end, it was proposed to aid the revenue, by means of duties from those, who, they said, had derived so much benefit from the war, the American colonies. "The British finances," says an English historian, "were exhausted by a war begun for the security of the colonies. It was, therefore, not only equitable that they should contribute, but extremely ungrateful in them to refuse." Hence originated the stamp duty, and the duty on tea, &c. If the war had cost the colonies something, it had enriched them infinitely. It opened to their use, enlargement and greatness, vast tracts of country, to which they could lay claim in right of charters granted them by the kings of Great Britain. Besides this advantage to the colonies generally, an indemnity was granted to individuals for losses and labors during the war. By "royal proclamation," each field officer who served in the war, was to receive 5000 acres of land, each captain 3000, subalterns 2000, and so down to the private soldiers, who were to have 50 acres apiece.

In a previous war with France, Great Britain reimbursed the colonies for their service in it, about 1,000,000 dollars. You will consider also, that the colonies, at the time these taxes were imposed, were integral parts of the British empire; they acknowledged the supremacy of the British crown, and had no wish to separate from Great Britain. The stamp duty was a thing which the colonies did not like. Yet during the selfsame war, and for the purposes of the war, the Legislature of Massachusetts had passed a stamp act in which even newspapers were included. The colonists when they came to be assessed for their part of the expenses of the war, *chose to go into another war*, rather than pay a cent.

The Americans, in the year 1794, after the Revolutionary War,

passed a law taxing stills and distilled spirits throughout the United States, in order to defray the expenses of that war. The people of Pennsylvania, or a very considerable body of them, refused to pay the tax, interrupted the officers who were sent to gather it, compelled some of them to resign, or have their houses burnt, robbed the mail, for purposes of the insurgency, burnt the inspector of the revenue in effigy; collected in large armed bands. Gen. Washington, who was then President, despatched an army to subdue them, and government being the stronger, accomplished its purpose.

This is exactly like what took place when England issued her excise bills. The people of Boston, then the most prominent in the provinces, assembled in mobs, burnt and demolished houses, erected effigies, collected in armed bodies, stopped the course of the law. England sent over an army to compel obedience. Government proved the weaker, and failed in its purpose. This was at a time, it may be borne in mind, when the people of Massachusetts professed allegiance to the authority of the British crown. The tax on distilled spirits was to pay off the debts of the Revolutionary War. The people of Pennsylvania refused to be taxed. The tax on paper, tea, &c., was to pay off the debts of the French war. The people of Massachusetts refused to be taxed. So also the people of Massachusetts, the first to rush into the Revolutionary War on the score of taxes, so taxed themselves in the course of the war, that they could not bear up under the intolerable load, and rebelled against their own government; but government being the stronger, routed the rebels, and smothered their discontents by force of powder and ball. I refer to Shay's insurrection. With a population of about 350,000, Massachusetts was obliged for some time after the war to support a direct tax of nearly 500,000 dollars annually.

MORAL DEGENERACY OF REVOLUTIONARY TIMES.—The following extract of a letter from Gen. Washington, written during the war, is entitled to some attention in this connection. "*Our conflict*," he says, "*is not likely to cease so soon as every good man could wish. The measure of iniquity is not yet full; and unless we can act a little more upon patriotic grounds, I know not what may be the issue of the contest. Speculation—peculation—engrossing—forestalling—with all their concomitants, afford too many proofs of THE DECAY OF PUBLIC VIRTUE, and too glaring instances of its being the interest and desire of too many who would be thought friends, to continue the war.*"

What Gen. Washington here says, is abundantly verified in all the histories of the times. Indeed, if the accounts are to be relied on, you would think there never was so corrupt a nation on the face of the earth as these American people, *during the war*. "*Such a spirit of avarice and peculation had crept into the public departments*," writes an American historian, "*and taken a deep hold of THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE, as Americans a few years before were thought incapable of.*" "*There sprang up*," says another historian, "*during the war, a race of men who sought to make private advantage out of the public distress.*" "*This public pest*," he adds, "*spread wider every day. It gangrened the VERY HEART OF THE STATE.*" "*The extravagant luxury of our country*," says Dr. Franklin, "*in the midst of all its distresses, is to me amazing. When our difficulties are so great to find remittances to pay for the arms and ammunition necessary for our defence, I am astonished and vexed to find upon inquiry, that much the greatest part of the Congress interest bills come to pay for tea, and a great part of the remain-*

der is ordered to be laid out in gewgaws and superfluities." Congress, through its committees, writing to our commissioners in France, says, "*There is scarce an officer, CIVIL OR MILITARY, but that feels something of a desire to be concerned in mercantile speculation.*" The letter adds, "*We are almost a continental tribe of Jews.*"

I know of no expression that seems more fitly to describe the American people, or rather I should say, *the effects of the war upon the people*, —a continental tribe of Jews, and this said *by Congress itself!* I need not say it pains me to speak of such things; I have no desire to asperse our fathers; I propose only to state *the effects of war* upon a people confessedly as good as any on the earth.

CONTINENTAL CURRENCY.—The revolutionary Congress, in order to raise money and means to carry on the war, issued bills of credit, from time to time to the amount of more than 375,000,000 dollars. The States issued many millions more. Many millions more of forged notes were thrown into the market from British sources. And Congress knew this would happen, for they were distinctly informed of such a purpose on the part of Great Britain beforehand by their agents abroad. Well, these bills depreciated, they sunk from two to three, to 40, to 150, and even as low as 500, for hard money. But Congress ordered that these bills should be received for their par value. It was ordered, "*that who-soever should refuse to receive the bills in payment of any debt or contract, or as the price of any commodity, or merchandize, should be deemed an enemy to his country, and should lose the amount of his debt or of the article sold, which should henceforth be considered the property of the debtor or the purchaser.*" For instance, it was ordered; I owe you forty dollars for an article purchased before the depreciation. I buy forty of these bills for one dollar, and if you do not take them, you lose your debt. Or I bargain with you for an article, and tender you continental bills; if you decline them, I may take the article whether or no.

Mr. Felt in his history furnishes the following illustration of these financial operations. "While the old emission money of Congress was legally set at the rate of 75 dollars for one of specie in Massachusetts, it fell to 120 in Philadelphia. This difference subjected our dealers to great imposition. One marked case may serve as a sample,—A noted merchant in Boston received a large amount of such paper from a friend of his in the former metropolis, with instructions to buy up whatever saleable articles he could. Accordingly he went to the principal stores which were well filled with goods. He pointed to a shelf of cotton, of linen, and so on, inquiring the price, and when told, said, 'I will take the whole lot.' But when he came to pay the venders in the old continental notes, they were exceedingly provoked. Still the law afforded them no remedy." "The Philadelphian," adds Mr. Felt, "made an enormous profit out of the affair."

After the bills began to depreciate, Congress "enacted, that whoever pays or receives this currency, at a less rate than originally prescribed, besides being accounted an enemy to his country, shall forfeit the sum so exchanged." Moreover, I would state, that these enactments—can I call them any thing else than iniquitous?—of Congress, after being sanctioned by the State Legislatures, in Massachusetts at least, were ordered to be read to the people, by the minister from the pulpit, Sunday by Sunday, as they came out! Supplies were taken for the army by compulsion, the people being offered these bills when they had lost all manner of credit. Frequently it was the case, that those who owed

money, when they saw the government currency every day sinking, would wait till it had reached its lowest ebb, and then buy up the bills, and pay off their debts. Some of the people, we are told, were at first very much pleased with what they considered a rise in prices, the same, I suppose, as the rise in old horses during the Aroostook war. The wages of the common soldiers were about \$6.67 per month. There were periods in the war when six months wages would scarcely return the soldier a dollar. In the famous battle of Blenheim, at which the famous Duke of Marlboro' so distinguished himself, near the close of the day he saw a soldier leaning upon the butt of his gun. "Why so sad, my friend," said the Duke, "after so glorious a victory?" "It may be a glorious victory," replied the fellow, "but I am thinking that all the blood I have spilt to-day has only earned me fourpence." These poor soldiers of the Revolution could scarcely earn a half-penny for their days of blood.

If we compare the amount of money issued with the scale of its depreciation, it would appear that *thousands of millions* were lost to the country. Our fathers very patriotically refused to pay a tax of three pence a pound on tea, and in the same patriotic way taxed themselves hundreds of millions of dollars beyond what they were ever able to pay. This emission of which I speak, of 375,000,000 dollars, after it had been out awhile, Congress declared to be null and void, called it in, burnt it up, and went on to new emissions. Every department of state, every rank in life, as the authorities before quoted show, was most thoroughly corrupted by this means of carrying on the war. Corrupted, I say. If government throws into circulation 375,000,000 dollars, without a dollar in specie to back it up, and compels people under penalty of law to receive the bills at par value, and in a short time pronounces it good for nothing, be not corruption and fraud, and the cause of corruption and fraud, then in the name of common sense, and courts of equity, and all criminal jurisprudence, what is corruption and fraud? I have no wish to reflect upon the Revolutionary War in speciality. *No war* ever was or ever can be carried on without corruption and fraud. If our government at this day should adopt a course like that of the Revolution, it could not stand for a moment; the people would fall upon it like a live thunder-bolt, and rend it in shivers and shreds. These are no questions of party politics, they are no questions of geographical pride; they are questions of morality, stern and awful morality—vaster than the world, high as heaven, immutable as God.

INTOLERANCE, MOBOCRACY, AND DESPOTISM OF REVOLUTIONARY TIMES.—A large portion, a very respectable minority of the people were always opposed to the war, *i. e.* during its entire continuance. Throughout the length and breadth of the land, there were thousands and thousands of the people, who honestly and conscientiously thought the war was wrong. Americans, according to Dr. Franklin, were dispersed through all the nations of Europe, seeking to return to their native soil as soon as they could with safety and security to their persons and property. Pennsylvania and Maryland were both opposed to the declaration of independence when it was first started. New York ever seemed cold on the subject of the separation. Tories, as they were called, constituted a respectable minority of her citizens. Those who were friendly to Great Britain seem to have formed nearly all the population of the western portions of the Carolinas and Georgia. The Quakers, then a very influential body in Pennsylvania, were al-

most to a man averse to the war. The Scotch settlers in the country were generally opposed to the war.

Congress enacted early in the struggle, that *whoever should be thought friendly to Great Britain should be arrested and imprisoned, and unless he took the oath of allegiance, his estate should be confiscated.* Yet the same Congress but two years before had said, that it did not wish to separate from Great Britain. A vast majority of the people had, at first, no wish to go into the war. A respectable minority still adhered to the same opinions, opinions that had been the original and long established sentiments and doctrines of the country. This minority were subject to such abuse, such persecution, such odium, as it pains my brain to think upon. I claim for these persons, and it is all I ask for them, that they be allowed to think what they please, to be friendly to what they please, to go and to come as they please. I ask for them the free enjoyments of the rights of the minority. Will any republican citizen of a free American state deny them this? I maintain, that the imposition of tests, the restraint of person, the jeopardy of estate, the overawing of free thought, the violent interference with conscientious choice, is despotism, wherever and by whomsoever exercised. There was a law passed in Rhode Island, that if "any one had intelligence with the English, he should be put to death, and his estate suffer confiscation." Congress recommended to the States to pass laws for confiscating and selling the estates of the tories, that is, for such as chose to continue in the same mode of thinking that had, very foolishly if you please, prevailed in the country from its settlement. Nor were these laws, and the spirit out of which they grew, without effect. Fifteen hundred of these people were compelled to leave Boston, "fathers," says the historian, "carrying burthens, mothers their children, ran weeping towards the ship." "The Americans when they came in possession of the city, immediately confiscated the property, moveable and immoveable, of those who had left."

It is a noticeable fact in this connection, that South Carolina offered a few years before the war, large bounties of lands to people in Great Britain who would emigrate and settle in her territories, and many did come over. Suppose these people did not think on the subject of the war just as the majority thought—how sad their condition! Gov. Tryon of New York had given 10,000 acres of land to found a professorship in one of the N. Y. colleges. Yet he had not a moment's peace in the country after the war broke out. Congress passed resolutions "that *all persons* residing within, or *passing through* any one of the United States, owed allegiance to the government thereof, and that any person who should adhere to the king of Great Britain, should be guilty of treason; and recommended to the several States to enact laws *for their punishment.* That same Congress, eighteen months before, had sworn to be faithful to king George, a stupid fellow though he was. Suppose a man chose to entertain his own opinions on politics; his person was imprisoned, his character abused, his property plundered.

In Massachusetts, and also in some other colonies, in the early part of the war, the people appointed persons to examine the books of merchants, and see what their purchases were, to impose tests, and *inflict punishment* upon such as would not show their books. The Legislature of Massachusetts, agreeably to the resolve of Congress, did empower officers of the state to arrest and imprison such as refused the continental money. I might give you the melancholy story of Sir William

Johnson, who lived in the centre of the State of New York, "a man," says the historian, "of the body of the people himself, and whose sympathies were undoubtedly with the people;" though his views of public policy and private duty may have differed somewhat from some of his neighbors. His fortune was extensive, his mansion princely. He was driven from it all, hurried into the woods, his provisions became exhausted, his feet made sore by travelling; his furniture, not excepting his old family Bible, was sold at auction, and applied to purposes of the war. *Every one who resided within, or travelled through the country, must render allegiance to the government, or suffer as a traitor.*

I come next to the dictatorship of Washington, or absolute despotism that reigned in this country for the space of six months. We are generally taught to suppose the revolutionary struggle was one for liberty, equality and human rights. Scarcely were the pens dry from signing the declaration of independence, when the members of Congress, without consulting the people, and with no instructions from the people, *and because the people would not do as they wished*, "decreed that Washington be invested with most complete and ample powers, to levy and organize in any or all the States sixteen battalions of infantry, artillery and dragoons to match, to call into service the militia of the States, to displace and appoint all the under officers, to take wherever he might be, and whatever he wanted from the people, to provision his army, *to arrest and confine persons who refused to take the continental currency*, or were otherwise disaffected to the American cause, etc. and to have this power for six months." Not all the kings of Europe, not the Cæsars or Scyllas of antiquity ever had such power in their hands. If this investiture be considered, principle by principle, point by point, it will be seen that it combines the purse and the sword in the same hand, that it unites legislative, executive and judicial powers, that it places the military above the civil authority; it suspended the right of habeas corpus, and trial by jury; it was a vast engine by which a fictitious currency was kept in circulation. I do not say that General Washington ever abused this trust. He was too magnanimous for that. It would have been enough for him to use it. Gen. Washington did not assume this power to himself. *It was placed upon him.* The historians of Washington—Sparks and Marshall,—pass over this point so lightly, so ambiguously, you would hardly know what was intended. But there the facts are in black and white, in blood and havoc. We sought protection from British despotism. We had imposed upon us as arrant a despotism as ever people lived under. No man was safe; no property was safe; we must take the continental currency, which was not worth seven straws, or lie in chains.

We have thus given some of the *facts* adduced by Mr. Judd; and our readers can make their own inferences. The writer is certainly not responsible for the facts, or for the impressions they make on his own mind; and it seems too strange for belief, that a man is to be branded, and driven from society, for repeating what Franklin, and Adams, and Washington, and other revolutionary patriots said of themselves and their associates. Where are we?—in America, or Turkey?—in the nineteenth century, or the dark ages?